



COMMUNICATOR GUIDE

The Kid / Week 4

SERIES OVERVIEW

SERIES SUMMARY

So much of the transformative power of the Christmas narrative lies in the reality that Jesus was born and raised in a place so small and inconsequential that it appears on no maps prior to the 1st century. This series encourages middle schoolers to consider how a Kid from nowhere (Jesus) changes everything: how you see your situation, how you see yourself and everyone else, and how you see your fear.

SERIES BOTTOM LINE

The Kid changes how you see your fear

WEEKLY BOTTOM LINES

WEEK 1: Christmas is about the Kid who changed everything

WEEK 2: The Kid shows us that Christmas is for everyone

WEEK 3: The Kid changes how you see your fear

WEEK 4: The Kid changes everything, especially you

SCRIPTURE

“For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16 NLT).

“I came so they can have real and eternal life, more and better life than they ever dreamed of” (John 10:10 MSG).

NOTES FOR THIS WEEK

THINK ABOUT THIS

This is a great week to introduce an invitation to take a new step of faith to your students. Of course, this will look different depending on where each student is on their faith journey. For some, this may be an invitation to take step toward a deeper relationship or commitment to Jesus. For others, it may be a step to simply incorporate their faith into other parts of their everyday life. And for many, this may be the first step they ever take toward following Jesus. Whether they commit simply to showing up again at Small Group to keep the conversation going or choose for the first time to follow Jesus with their lives, any step of faith is a big deal for your middle schoolers. So, as you close this series, encourage your students to take a step of faith, seemingly big or small, and let Jesus change their lives. And of course, don't forget to celebrate when they do! Whatever step they take, it's a brave and big deal for a middle schooler to acknowledge, so don't forget to make sure they know how excited and proud of them you are.

INTERACTIVE 1: CHRISTMAS DÉCOR DEBATE

OVERVIEW

For this Interactive, you'll have students vote on whether they decorate for Christmas before or after Thanksgiving by moving to a side of the room. They'll then choose a spokesperson to debate the other team about why their opinion is the right one.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- All of your middle schoolers
- Room for students to move to opposite sides of your environment

TEACHING OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

- I want to talk about what could possibly be the most controversial part of the holiday season: Christmas decorations.
- There are two types of people in the world: the people who decorate for Christmas before Thanksgiving and the people who decorate after Thanksgiving.
- *[INTERACTIVE: Christmas Décor Debate: This is where you'll have students vote on whether they decorate for Christmas before or after Thanksgiving by moving to a side of the room. They'll then choose a spokesperson to debate the other team about why their opinion is the right one.]*
- No matter which side of this debate you stand on, I think there's one thing we can all agree on, and that's January.
- Everything Christmas gets put away, and the holiday is over.
- For a lot of us, that means everything about Jesus—the Kid whose arrival we celebrate—is put away for the rest of the year, too.

TENSION

- This isn't a guilt trip! And it's not something we do on purpose.
- It's just so easy to think about, talk about, learn about, and care about our relationship with Jesus in a different way during the Christmas season. *[Give relevant examples.]*
- Then, the season is over. And with it, so is the ease of finding Jesus in our everyday lives. *[Give relevant examples.]*
- I'm not saying we're wrong, or bad, or totally messing up this faith thing every month besides December.
- My question for all of us is simply this: What if it didn't have to be that way?
- What if we made learning about, thinking about, and understanding why that Kid deserves all this attention and celebration in our everyday lives an everyday thing?

TRUTH

- The idea of Jesus showing up has existed since the beginning of time.
- All the way back in the first chapters of Genesis, many believe a Savior is referenced who would come to rescue, redeem, and restore humanity.
- For thousands of years, people were waiting and looking for the coming Messiah God promised was on the way.
- With all of this build up, you'd think He would've burst onto the scene with all kinds of ceremony and celebration, a lot like the way we do Christmas now!
- Instead, people got a Kid born and placed in a manger from the middle of nowhere.

- Just about everything Jesus did in His ministry wasn't what people expected either. *[Give relevant examples.]*
- Even though He came in a way that nobody expected, acted in a way that nobody expected, and did things that no one expected, there could be no doubt at the end of the day: This Kid was the Savior the world had been waiting for.
- This is the full story of the full life of Jesus, and it's the reason we celebrate the birth of this Kid every single year at Christmas and beyond.
- We don't just follow Jesus because He came into the world in an ordinary, unexpected way. We follow Jesus because of all He did for us well after that.
- John, one of Jesus' closest followers during His time on Earth, recorded what Jesus said about His role as a Savior.
 - *"For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16 NLT).*
- This is why the Kid matters to us today and every day.
- His arrival on the scene that very first Christmas was only the beginning, and it kicked off a series of events that would change everything.
- The Kid changes everything, especially you.
- Everything about Jesus' birth, life, ministry, death, and resurrection changes our lives, our faith, and our futures.
- Look at how He put it Himself:
 - *"I came so they can have real and eternal life, more and better life than they ever dreamed of" (John 10:10 MSG).*
- Why shouldn't we box Jesus up with all the other Christmas stuff at the end of the season? Because that's what a full life in Jesus is all about.
- It's about understanding that He changed everything with His birth, His life, and beyond, and He wants to change everything for us too.
- The Kid changes everything, especially you.

APPLICATION

- Let's find a way to remember Jesus beyond His birth.
- To help with that, here's what I think we can do:
 - Pick one part of Christmas that teaches you something about the Kid.
 - Then, choose not to box it up when the season is done.
- Let it help you remember that the Kid changes everything, especially you.

LANDING

- Before long, you'll be packing up Christmas, January will come, and you'll have to wait another year to celebrate again.
- Thanks to the Kid, you can experience the best possible life in any season.
- The Kid changes everything, especially you.
- What's one way Jesus has changed your life?

TEACHING SLIDES

All bolded words and phrases in the Teaching Script are also provided as teaching slides for Premium Tier subscribers.



TEACHING SCRIPT

The Kid / Week 4

BOTTOM LINE

THE KID CHANGES EVERYTHING, ESPECIALLY YOU

INTRODUCTION

2 ½ MINUTES

Merry Christmas, friends! I'm so glad you're here as we wrap up our series on the backstory of Christmas called *The Kid*. As we get started today, I want to talk about what could possibly be the most controversial part of the holiday season. It's the kind of thing that divides friendships and starts fights in families. It's so divisive that I'm almost afraid to bring it up today!

Yes, that's right, I'm talking about Christmas decorations.

See, there are two types of people in the world: the people who decorate for Christmas before Thanksgiving and the people who decorate after Thanksgiving. I'd love to know where you stand in this debate!

INTERACTIVE: Christmas Décor Debate

This is where you'll have students vote on whether they decorate for Christmas before or after Thanksgiving by moving to a side of the room. They'll then choose a spokesperson to debate the other team about why their opinion is the right one.

If you think decorating for Christmas before Thanksgiving is a no-brainer, I want you to move to this side of the room. *[Motion to a side of your environment.]* For all of you who think you should only decorate after Thanksgiving, move over here. *[Motion to the other side of your environment.]*

Now that you're with your group, decide on a spokesperson who will debate with the opposing team and give all the reasons you think your opinion is right.

[Allow time for the debate.]

Like we just saw, there are the people who turn on the Christmas music starting in early November, have their tree up before the Thanksgiving meal is even thought about, and are decking the halls before putting out the turkey every year. *[Motion to the appropriate side of the room.]* And then there are people who want to soak in the football and fun of Thanksgiving, give the harvest decorations their fair shot, and won't even think about Christmas until it's officially December. *[Motion to the appropriate side of the room.]*

No matter which side of this debate you stand on, I think there's one thing we can all agree on, and that's January. The month when the holiday season is over. Just like that, everyone's focus is on their New Year's resolutions, the Christmas tree is drooping and shedding, and family has come and gone. Everything Christmas gets put away, and the holiday is over.

And for a lot of us, that means everything about Jesus—the Kid whose arrival we celebrate—is put away for the rest of the year, too.

TENSION

1 ½ MINUTES

Don't worry, I'm not about to take you on a guilt trip! This isn't just true of some of you; it's true of me, too!

I don't think it's something we do on purpose. It's just so easy to think about, talk about, learn about, and care about our relationship with Jesus in a different way during the Christmas season.

We can find Him...

In the lyrics of some of our favorite classic Christmas songs,
In the stories we talk about in Scripture during this season,
In the traditions we share at church and at home,
In the prayers we say around the dinner table,
In the very reason for the season we celebrate in December every year.

Then, the season is over. And with it, so is the ease of finding Jesus in our everyday lives.

We turn off the Christmas music.
We stop going to extra church services and special events.
We head back to school, and sports, and clubs, and friends.
We have less time to put into thinking about, talking about, and learning about Jesus.

Again, this isn't a guilt trip! I'm not saying we're wrong, or bad, or totally messing up this faith thing every month besides December.

My question for all of us is simply this: What if it didn't have to be that way? What if the focus we have on Jesus during the Christmas season is something that could go beyond December? What if we didn't just celebrate a Kid who was placed in a manger once a year? What if we made learning about, thinking about, and understanding why that Kid deserves all this attention and celebration in our everyday lives an everyday thing?

TRUTH

4 ½ MINUTES

As we dive into the Truth about the Kid in Scripture, I think it's important to go back to the beginning. Not the beginning of Jesus' life, but the beginning of it all!

See, the idea of Jesus showing up has existed since the beginning of time. Not the specific name of Jesus, but the promise of a Messiah who would rescue humanity from sin. All the way back in the first chapters of Genesis, many believe a Savior is referenced who would come to rescue, redeem, and restore humanity. So, for thousands of years, people were waiting and looking for the coming Messiah God promised was on the way.

That's what makes it so incredible to know how the Kid finally came into the world! With all of this build up, you'd think He would've burst onto the scene with all kinds of ceremony and celebration. Honestly, you'd think it would be a lot like the way we do Christmas now! In reality, the Kid was born in Bethlehem and grew up in Nazareth. Both of those towns were seemingly small and insignificant. They certainly

weren't places where people would expect a Savior to come from! And you must think nobody expected the long-awaited Messiah to come in the form of a baby. They probably were looking for a military leader, or a religious teacher, or a popular politician kind of guy. Instead, they got a Kid born and placed in a manger from the middle of nowhere.

Just about everything Jesus did in His ministry wasn't what people expected either. Over the course of His ministry, we see that the Kid from Nazareth turned water to wine, healed the sick, raised the dead, calmed storms, forgave sins, gave up His own life, ultimately rose from the dead, and ascended back into heaven. No one had ever done that before, and no one's done it since! So even though He came in a way that nobody expected, acted in a way that nobody expected, and did things that no one expected, there could be no doubt at the end of the day: **This Kid was the Savior the world had been waiting for.**

This is the full story of the full life of Jesus. It's the reason we celebrate the birth of this Kid every single year at Christmas. And it's the reason that the celebration should continue well beyond Christmas. After all, we don't just follow Jesus because He came into the world in an ordinary, unexpected way. We follow Jesus because of all He did for us well after that.

John, one of Jesus' closest followers during His time on Earth, recorded what Jesus said about His role as a Savior. And I think it can help us understand why the Kid deserves our worship well beyond one month out of the year. Take a look:

“For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16 NLT).

This is the gospel.

This is the Good News.

This is why the Kid matters to us today and every day.

His arrival on the scene that very first Christmas was only the beginning. It kicked off what would become a life, a ministry, and a sacrifice that would change everything for all of us. And that's what I want you to remember as we close this Christmas season and head into the New Year.

The Kid changes everything, especially you.

The birth of Jesus is what shows us that God was faithful to fulfill the promise of a Savior.

The life of Jesus is what gives us an example of how to live.

The ministry of Jesus is what teaches us what it means to love and follow God.

The death of Jesus is what saved us from an eternity away from God.

The resurrection of Jesus is what proves He was who He said He is all along.

The gift of His Holy Spirit—which is His power and His presence with us—shows us that we are never alone.

All of that stuff? It changes our lives, it changes our faith, and it changes our futures. It's what makes the full life Jesus promised to us possible in the first place. Look at how He put it Himself:

“I came so they can have real and eternal life, more and better life than they ever dreamed of” (John 10:10 MSG).

Why shouldn't we box Jesus up with all the other Christmas stuff at the end of the season? Why should we give Him our attention even after the holiday is over? Why should we continue to learn about and worship the Kid every day of the year? Because that's what a full life in Jesus is all about. It's about receiving all He's offered us—the greater, better life that's more than we could dream of. It's about believing that He rescued us from the weight of our sin and saved us for eternity. It's about understanding that He changed everything with His birth, His life, and beyond, and He wants to change everything for us too.

The Kid changes everything, especially you.

APPLICATION

1 MINUTES

The challenge to all of us this week is this: **Let's find a way to remember Jesus beyond His birth.**

To help with that, here's what I think we can do.

Pick one part of Christmas that teaches you something about the Kid. Maybe it's a song that you love to sing, or a tradition your family carries on that focuses on Jesus, or a passage of Scripture that really makes you think of Him. Maybe it's the way you pray, or spend time with God, or focus on learning about the birth of Jesus. Whatever it is for you, write it down to keep it in your mind as you move through Christmas this year.

Then, **choose not to box it up when the season is done.** Instead of moving on, go back to that part of Christmas that teaches you something new about the Kid. Ask God to help you discover something new about your faith as you discover more about Jesus beyond the holiday season. Pay attention to the way you change for the better because of the time you spend growing in faith and growing closer to Jesus well beyond this holiday.

Let it help you remember that **the Kid changes everything, especially you.**

LANDING

1 MINUTE

Before long, you'll be packing up Christmas, January will come, and you'll have to wait another year to celebrate again. But thanks to the Kid, you can experience the best possible life in any season. Not because you have different circumstances, but because you have Him.

The Kid changes everything, especially you.

So, when you head to Small Group now, I want you to think about this question: **What's one way Jesus has changed your life?**



TRANSITION INTO SMALL GROUPS
